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THE

ORIENTAL RACES AND TRIBES

Residents and Visitors of Bombay.

A SERIES OF PHOTOGRAPHS,

WITH LETTER-PRESS DESCRIPTIONS.

102849

BY WILLIAM JOHNSON.
BOMBAY CIVIL SERVICE (UNCOV.)

VOL. II.—MAHÁRÁSHTRA, OR MARÁTHÁ COUNTRY.

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PREFACE.

OUR Second Volume is devoted to the Mahárâshtra, or Maráthá Country, in which the great City of Bombay itself is situated. In no Province of India has the Caste-system been so fully developed as in this part of the land. In consequence of this circumstance, it has been found necessary for us to make a selection of characters for representation in this work; and this we have done according to our best judgment. The Maráthá Bráhmans—the best representatives of the A'ryan race in the comparative purity of their blood—have obtained our first attention; and with them we have associated their Karnátika brethren, who have much intercourse with them, and the Bairágis and Gosávis, who, as religious devotees, have, according to the modern system of Hinduism, an influence even superior to their own among certain classes of the people. The three castes—Parbhu, Sonár, and Somavansha Kshatriyas—from whom the Indian writers of Bombay are principally selected, follow them. In regard to the Maráthás, who form the staple population of the country, we have found, we trust, very suitable representatives, both male and female; and with them we have connected the Kámáthís of the Tailanga country, the most industrious class of people in Bombay. Of the Kulís, who as yet but partially observe the Hindu institutes, we have given several suitable examples; as we have done of several of the lower tribes, and of those—as the Chámbhárs, Maháŕs, and Mángs—who are *degraded in the* Indian community by the prejudices of race, caste, and occupation. The Muhammadans both of the Dakhan and Konkan are a class too important to be overlooked; and specimens of them, as found both in the Dakhan and Konkan, are here given. Much curiosity is cherished in connexion with the Bene-Israel of Bombay; and we have done our best for its gratification. The Roman Catholics of Goa and Salsette appropriately conclude the volume.

For the whole of the letterpress descriptions we are indebted to the Rev. Dr. Wilson. He could not have rendered us the valuable assistance which he has done, had he not for some years been engaged in the preparation of an extensive work on "Caste in the Indian Literature and the Indian Life," the greater portion of which is already in type.

BRÁHMANS OF THE DAKHAN AND KONKAN.

(No. 1.)

THE principal Bráhman castes of the Maráthá Country are the Déshasthas and Konkanasthas.

1. The Déshasthas are the Bráhmans of the *Désha*, the country above the Sahya Ghát, in which the Maráthí language is spoken. Numbers of them are to be found, however, wherever the arms and rule of the Maráthás have been carried—in the Karnátika, Konkan, and in the Baroda, Indur, Gvalér (or Gwalior), and Tanjur States; and at the principal *Tírthas* of the Hindus, as at Banáras, Gayá, etc. Most of the Maráthí Poets have belonged to their order. The majority of them follow secular employments *(laukika Karmma)*, as agents, accountants, writers, merchants, cultivators, calling themselves by the honorary titular affix of *Pant, Ráo, Désái, Deshpándé, Déshmukh, Kulkarní, Patil,* &c. Those of them who receive no dakshina are called *Grihasthas*, or householders. Those who receive dakshina are called *Bhikshukas* (mendicants), among whom are *Vaidikas, Shástrís, Joshis, Vaidyas* (physicians), *Puránikas, Haridásas, Brahmachárís*. Generally speaking, they are of darker features than the Konkanasthas, though the principal habitat of the latter is near the sea. This is not entirely owing to their southern seat. Their ancestors have probably, to a considerable extent, availed themselves of the old Bráhmanical law authorising a Bráhman to marry the daughter of a Shúdra, as well as of the three A'rya castes, the issue of this marriage having been admissible to the Bráhmanhood in the seventh generation.

2. Of the *Konkanasthas*, the most conspicuous caste is that of the *Chittapávanas*. The meaning of their designation is "pure-in-heart." In the Sahyádrí Khanda, of the Skanda Purána, which bears marks of the composition or interpolation of some Déshastha of Kolápur (which City is much bepraised in it), they are, absurdly enough, said to have been made by the incarnation Parashuráma (in want of Bráhmans to perform a shráddha) from the *chitá*, or funeral pile of sixty men, whom he consecrated and endowed with the Bráhmanhood, bestowing on them learning and beauty, and conferring on them fourteen *Gotras* and sixty *Upanámas* (surnames). Their allotted residence (Kshétra) is called the *Surpáraka*, extending from the Vaitaraní river on the north to the Subrahmanya on the south, and from the sea on the west to the Sahya range on the east. Like the Déshasthas, however, they proceed for employment to many of the Provinces of India. They are greatly distinguished for their talents and administrative capacity, and are often the Ministers of the native States. They are among the fairest (probably the fairest) of the Hindu races. They met with great favour from the Péshwahs, who, with their distinguished chiefs, the Patavardhans, belonged to their caste. A considerable number of them, under the name of Khots, are hereditary farmers of the Land Revenue in small districts allotted to them.

Of both *Déshasthas* and *Konkanasthas* our Photograph presents examples. The two persons standing without support are Déshasthas; and so is the youth in the corner, with his eyes apparently shut. The others are Konkanasthas.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

No 1.

BRÁHMANS OF THE DAKHAN AND KONKAN.

MARÁTHÍ BRÁHMAN WOMEN.

(Nos. 2 and 3.)

WE have already made a few remarks on the occupations of Bráhman women.* These remarks are applicable to the Maráthí Bráhmanís as well as to the Nágarís. The duties of both classes of women are principally of a domestic character. More liberty of moving about, however, is enjoyed by the Bráhmanís of the Maráthí country than those of the other Provinces of India. Education, too, has made a little progress among some of them, especially in Bombay, Puná, and Kolápur. Their marriages, arranged by their parents, are celebrated at a very early age, varying from their fifth to their tenth year, while there is no restriction put upon the age of the husband. When the husband dies, as is not unfrequently the case, before the wife has had any connexion with him, she is considered a widow, and is not permitted to effect another marriage. The proportion of widows among the Maráthí Bráhmans is greater than among any other class of the Hindu community. Their morals are watched over with considerable strictness; and they strive to make themselves useful in family service, especially in cooking. Those of them who are mothers are treated with consideration and kindness. The Bráhmanís of the Maráthí country are not accustomed to wear so many ornaments as those of Gujarát; but we shall not venture to say whether this is from choice or from comparative poverty. In their widowed state, both classes of females are bereft of all ornaments. In the Southern Konkan the awful rite of Satí was fearfully prevalent among the Bráhmanís before it was interdicted by the British Government in 1830.

Photograph No. 2 represents two of the better class of Maráthí Bráhmanís. Their appearance is entirely that of the A'ryan type. Their dress is rather more copious than that of their humbler sisters, the *sádis* or *lugadis*, in which they are invested, being larger and finer than those commonly in use. They both wear the nose-ring, which among almost all castes of Hindu females, not in the weeds of widowhood, seems as indispensable as the organ to which it is attached.

The two young Ladies represented in Photograph No. 3 belong to the *Deshastha Bráhman* Caste. They were sent to Bombay for the completion of their education, being the wives of Students belonging to the upper classes of Hindu society. Their father is an Inámdár, and of high position in the Judicial service of Government—Rao Bahadur Tirmal Rao Vyankatesh.

* See Vol. I., p. 23.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

No 2.

MARATHI BRAHMAN WOMEN.

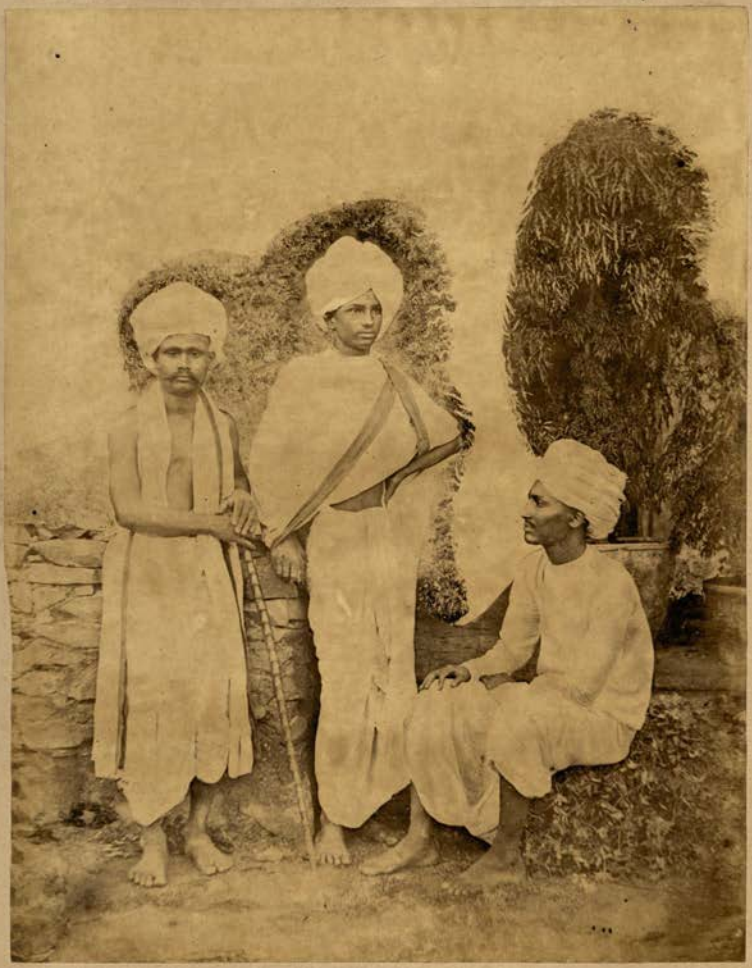
N° 3.

BRAHMAN LADIES OF THE DAKHAN.

KARNÁTIKA BRÁHMANS.

(No. 4.)

THE Karnátika Bráhmans belong to the Dravidian or Southern Division of the Hindu priestly order. They have a good deal to do with Bombay, both because in the southern portions of the Presidency (the Belgaum, Dhárwár, and Northern Canara Collectorates) the Canarese language is spoken, and because considerable numbers of people to whom that tongue is vernacular are now settled in the great commercial seat of the West of India. There are fewer distinctions recognized among them than among any other class of Bráhmans in India; though, on the Western Coast, they stand aloof from the *Konkaṇí*, the *Haika*, and *Tulava* Bráhmans. In appearance, they very much resemble the *Déshasthas*, who are very much intermingled with them (occupying, generally, the best Government appointments); and they differ from them only slightly in dress, as will be seen from a comparison of their respective photographs. In modern times, they have not been very remarkable for their learning, on which account, perhaps, the Lingáyats (forming a comparatively lately instituted Shaiva sect) have made great progress in the territories with which they are most intimately connected. The great majority of them engage in secular pursuits. Many of them rent lands and engage in agriculture. A few of them, who are Smárttas, are followers of Shankarácháŕya, a famous devotee of Shiva; and most of them, who are Vaishnavas, are followers of Mádhaváchárya. The people of the south of India are more under the influence of sectarian feelings than those of the north.



Oriental Races and Tribes.

№ 4.

KARNÁTIKA BRÁHMANS.

VAIRÁGÍS, OR BAIRÁGÍS.

(No. 5.)

ELIGIOUS Devotees have existed in India from the earliest times. The Rishis, or authors of the Vedic hymns, seem to have been rather personal devotees to the praise of the gods and religious service than members of an established or hereditary priesthood, though but few incidents of their course of life can be gathered from their ten or eleven hundred songs which have been preserved to the present day. When the Bráhmanical organization was arranged, the *Vanaprastha*, or Hermit of the Wilderness, and the *Sanyásí*, or Anchorite, were two of the four authoritatively constituted A'shramas, or Orders. The former practised austerities in the forests adjoining towns and villages; and the latter, devoted principally to contemplation, was enjoined to wander about continually, without giving pain to living beings. Even Kshatriyas, as Yuddhishthira and his brothers, with their common wife, Draupadí, are represented as performing the *Mahápraslhánika*, or great Journey to the Himálayas, on their way to the holy mount Méru, whence their *Svargarohana*, or Departure to Heaven is said to have taken place. As the legendry of Hinduism increased and became localized, certain places were viewed as peculiarly interesting and holy; and the devotees connected with them often set out on a visit to their whole circle. The Buddhist revolution, when it occurred, in the sixth or fifth century before Christ, put the mendicant devotee before the Bráhman; and had its numerous begging nuns as well as its monks. Of these, as representatives, the *Yatis* of the Jainas, very peaceful wanderers, though holding an atheistic creed, still remain in the North-West and South of India. When, after ten or twelve hundred years of domination, the Buddhist system of faith and practice was overthrown in its religious seat by resuscitated Bráhmanism, supported anew by the Indian princes, the professions and pretences of the devotee, somewhat modified by Buddhism, still continued. The great champions of Bráhmanism, such as Shankarácharya of the eighth or ninth century, and his associates and successors, who were themselves Bráhmanical devotees, assumed an importance never before conceded to mere individuals of the priesthood. They became the Svámis, or religious oracles, pontiffs, and lords of the country; but they did not long maintain undivided sway among its diversified tribes. The concept of the numerous gods of the pantheon had been changed from age to age; and the accumulation of legends connected with them gave scope to the popular choice, and facilities to the generation and growth of a rampant sectarianism, which appears even in the Puránas. The devotees of the different gods were the leaders of this movement; and everywhere they had a large following. One sect, as the case might be, was for the supremacy of Vishnu; another, for that of the deified kings, Rama and Krishna, both set forth as avataras or descents of Vishnu; a third, for that of Shiva, the god of increase, viewed as their *Mahadeva*, or Great God; a fourth, for that of his consort, *Devi*, or the goddess emphatically so called; and a fifth, for that of the female energies in general. The Devotees and Svámis moved throughout the country, and gradually brought by far the larger portion of the Hindus within the pale of their own sects, everywhere proclaiming also the advantages of visiting the famous shrines of the gods, and the various places rendered famous in their legendry. Hence the real origin of the Hindu religious orders, and the pilgrimages so dear to multitudes of the people.

The origin and peculiarities of many of the Hindu sects favouring these orders and encouraging the system of pilgrimage are now pretty precisely known. Two of the most important of them, intimately connected together, may be here noticed.

The *Shrí Sampradáya* sect of the *Vaishnavas* was, according to Professor H. H. Wilson, founded by *Rámanuja A'chárya*, a native of the south of India and a student of Kánchí, about the middle of the twelfth century. He was a dissentient from the violent support of Shiva by the Chola Raja Kerikála, and converted Rájá Vithal Déva, formerly a Jaina, to the faith of Vishnu. He propagated his peculiar doctrines both in the north and south of India; but it was in the latter division of the country that they made most progress. He established numerous *maths*, or convents, a few of which still remain. The teachers of his sect are principally Bráhmans; but his disciples may be of any caste, not of impure birth. One of the chief divisions of the sect is studious of perfect privacy in eating and drinking; and its numbers put on spare silk garments when taking their meals. Their mantra, used as a

pass-word, is "Salutation to Ráma." They are very careful about their pigments and sectarial marks, and have often their bodies, like other Vaishnava devotees, stamped with hot iron. They identify Vishnu with the creative as well as the preserving power. They identify God and the universe, and in this sense are pantheists; but they consider the Divinity to be essentially possessed of attributes. They are great opponents of the Shaivas, and are not very friendly even to the modern sects of the Vaishnavas. Some of their principal teachers find it profitable to visit Bombay.

The *Rámanandis*, so-called from their founder, originated about the end of the fourteenth or beginning of the fifteenth century. Rámananda, in the first instance, was a Rámanuja; but he took offence at his having been required to take his meals apart from his fellows, from suspicions formed of his having neglected the law of privacy during his peregrinations as a pilgrim, and started life on his own account. His general residence was at Benares; but he and his followers have founded many maths, or monastic residences, generally under a Mahant or Superior, throughout India—many of which have their own special endowments and privileges. The principal objects of the worship of the Rámanandis are Ráma and Sitá; and their principal mantra is *Jaya Ráma*, or *Jaya Sitá Ráma* (Victory to Ráma). They frequently denominate themselves *Sitá padres*. They are by no means so strict and precise as the sect from which they originated. They admit disciples of every caste, and enumerate among the alleged twelve principal pupils of their founder—*Kabir*, the weaver; *Raidás*, the currier; *Pipa*, the Rájput; *Dhanna*, the Ját; and *Séna*, the barber. Even their principal men are not necessarily Bráhmans. The Bráhmans who do join them profess to renounce the ties of nature and society. Their writings are not generally in Sanskrit, but in the vernacular dialects. They are filled with most outrageous fables, many of which are of a very amusing character, as may be seen from the Bhaktamálá. Most of the devotees who swarm throughout the north-west of India belong to this sect. The island of Bet, Dvárka in Okhamandal, and Dakor in the zillah of Kheda (Kaira), are the principal places of their pilgrimage.

The personages represented in our Photograph are *Rámanandis* of the division called *Khákis*, from their besmearing themselves with ashes. They have, with one exception, their hair folded in the form of what is called the *jatá*, at first appropriated by the followers of Shiva. Their compeers are often seen in a state approaching to nudity, and even in that of nudity itself. The "*Nágas*," or naked ones, are sometimes employed by the native princes as soldiers.

№ 5.

VAIRÁGIS; OR BAIRÁGIS.

GOSÁVANIS.

(No. 6.)

THE word *Gosvámi* etymologically means a lord of cows. From the pastoral habits of the ancient A'ryas, it came to be the equivalent of "master" or "gentleman." In the Prákrit languages it has been corrupted to *Gosávi*. Though the designation may be applied to respectable people in general, it is principally bestowed on religious devotees, and (in the west and south of India) especially on the devotees of Shiva following the order of Shankaráchárya. In this order there are women as well as men. The female devotees are called *Gosávanis* in the Maráthí language. In token of their professed oblivion of sex, they unite the costume of both male and female. They may join themselves in marriage with the *Gharbárí Gosávis* before they are fifteen years old, but not after that age. They much wander about as pilgrims, and are exposed to great temptations. They are excluded from their order only when they have connexion with persons not belonging to it. Our Photograph represents them in their usual appearance and style of dress. Only one of the five females of the group has on a turban like that of Hindu males; but all of them have the *angavastra* (wrapper), *angrakha* (coat), and *dhotar* (pendant washable cloth) of men. The only female insignia seen in this company are the bracelets. The brows of the Gosávanis are besmeared with yellow clay. The Vaishnava female devotees are generally followers of Míríbáí, a Princess of Udayapur, who abandoned her polygamous husband, and devoted herself to an erratic life and the service of Krishna, under the form of *Ranachhod*, whose praises she celebrated in many verses, which, from their frantic fervour, are very popular in Rajputáná and Gujarát. The female devotees sometimes learn to read and write. A few of them know a little Sanskrit.

N° 6.

GOSAVANIS.

PARBHUS, SONÁRS, AND SOMAVANSHA-KSHATRIYAS.

(Nos. 7 and 8.)

THESE people are separated from one another, according to the caste-system, at a considerable distance; but we group them together in this work as the examples of them which we have selected happen all to be engaged in Bombay in one occupation—that of writers and translators.

The *Parbhus*, or Prabhus (literally, lords or masters), correspond with the well-known *Káyasthas* (body-attendants) of Bengal and the North-west Provinces. They profess to be of Kshatriya origin, most of them the descendants of a posthumous son of Chandraséna, who succeeded Vikramáditya, in Central India, about A.D. 44, and hold themselves entitled to the religious privileges of Kshatriyas, while the Bráhmans profess to treat them as Shúdras. Whatever may be the fact with regard to these allegations, it may be inferred from their physiognomy and occupations that they are of A'ryan descent. The Bráhmans, who have certainly not been on good terms with them since the times of the Smritis or Law-books, hold that they are merely *Parabhus*, or foreigners. They (the Bráhmans) make two divisions of them besides the Parbhus properly so-called—namely, the *Aparakáyasthas* and *Parabhas;* but no such distinctions are known, at least in the west of India, at the present time. The connexion of the Parbhus with the *Káyasthas* is obvious, from the fact that one of their three castes, or divisions, in Bombay is denominated the *Kayastha-Parbhu*. Of this caste the *Davané* Parbhus of Malwán and Goa seem to be only a section. Another of their castes is called the *Pátányá Parbhu*, from *Patan* (Anhilwádá Patan, confounded sometimes by the Parbhus with Paithan on the Godávarí), the capital of the Hindu Kings of Gujarát, from which they found their way gradually to the Hindu, Muhammadan, Portuguese, and English settlements to the South. They are a very useful and industrious class of the native community, and make excellent writers and accountants. They are faithful beyond many to their employers, and seldom divulge official secrets. Some of them are in the employment of native Rájás. To the British Government they have always been loyal. Many of them show a tendency to depart from the primitive law of monogamy, and unhappily lend their countenance both to bigamy and concubinage. The third caste which appears among them in Bombay is nicknamed the *Sálkadu*, from the illegitimacy in which it is said to have originated. The spirit of reform has begun to move against all this sensuality. The Parbhus have the good sense to use animal food.

The *Sonárs* (Sanskrit, *Suvarnakars*) generally occupy the highest place among the Hindu artificers. From the earliest times they have had to execute the most delicate workmanship in the precious metals. They have not always been favourites of the Bráhmans, who have sought to degrade them by enacting the most severe and cruel laws against the stealing of gold. Yet they make them the descendants of Bráhmans by Shúdra women, according to one of the fictional absurdities of the caste-system, in accordance with which they try to explain the origin of what they call the "mixed classes," and allow them a religious standing in consequence superior to that of Shúdras. Some of the Konkan Sonárs hold themselves to be superior to the *Parashava Sonárs* of the books, and give themselves the designation of *Konkanastha Daivajna Rathakáras*, maintaining that they are a class of Upa-Bráhmans, or Inferior Bráhmans, sprung from *Daivajna*, the production of the fifth mouth of Shiva; or the descendants of a son of Vishvakarma of the same name; or Upa-Bráhmans (originally four in number), formed from Svayambhu Manu; or productions of the god Agni, and consequently called *Devágni* goldsmiths. Bráhmans are found who perform for them Vedic ceremonies. They are allowed to practise for themselves religious ablutions; to wear the *Dhautra*, or *Dhotar* (the washable cloth used instead of trowsers), and to deal in the manipulation of the precious metals and jewels. Many of them have successfully elevated themselves in Indian society, and have become writers, brokers, merchants, bankers, and house and land proprietors. One of their number, the late Hon. Jugonnath Sunkersett, was for the last forty years the recognized head of the Hindus of Bombay, taking a constant and effective interest in all public affairs.

The people of the caste denominating themselves *Somavansha Kshatriyas,* the Kshatriyas of the Lunar race, are known also by the name of *Páncha Kalashis,* from their arraying their bridegrooms' pálkhis with five ornamental spires; and by that of *Vádavals,* proprietors, or managers of an "onstead" or compound. They are known among the people generally as Sutárs or carpenters. They are among the oldest recognized inhabitants of Bombay, as well shown by the late Mr. Murphy. They show a laudable desire to advance themselves by education; and not a few of them are now useful clerks and managers in public offices. The late Mr. Hari Keshavají, one of the best Maráthí scholars, and the author of various useful translations and compositions, belonged to their fraternity.

In our Photographic group the native gentleman leaning against the stump of the tree—Vináyak Vasudéva, Esq., J.P., the learned and able Oriental Translator to Government—is a *Parbhu,* as is his friend seated at his right hand. His two friends standing on his right hand are *Sonárs.* Sitting near the stump is a *Somavansha Kshatriya.*

Oriental Races and Tribes.

№ 7.

PARBHUS, SONARS, AND SOMAVANSHA-KSHATRIYAS.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

Nº 8.

PARSHU WOMEN OF BOMBAY.

MARÁTHÁS OF THE DAKHAN.

(No. 9.)

SOME of the Maráthá chiefs claim to be of Rájput origin; but the Maráthá people are merely the common cultivators of the Maráthá country, with the rank of Shúdras. Of their character and position, the following account was given by the Hon. Mountstuart Elphinstone, in his "Report on the Territories Conquered from the Peshwa," written in 1819:—

"The Maráthá chiefs, while in power, and especially while with armies, are generally coarse, ignorant, rapacious, and oppressive. Those settled in their own country, and unconnected with courts and armies, bear a much better character, being sober, industrious, and encouragers of agriculture. It must indeed be remembered, both of this class and the Bráhmans, that we see the very worst of the whole, and that it is amongst those at a distance from the seat of government that we are to look for any virtue that may exist in the nation. The soldiery so much resemble the chiefs, that individuals of the two classes might change places without any striking impropriety. The chiefs, of course, are more vicious, and probably more intelligent. The Maráthá soldiery love war, as affording opportunities for rapine in an enemy's country, and marauding in a friend's. In battle, they seem always to have been the same dastardly race; but they are active, hardy, vigilant, patient of fatigue and privations; and, though timid in action, they show great boldness and enterprise in their incursions into distant countries; and on all occasions they appear to have the greatest confidence in their horses, though little or none in their swords. Their plan, in a campaign, is to avoid general engagements, to ravage their enemy's country, and to cut up convoys and detachments; in an action, it is to disperse when attacked, and to return to the charge when the enemy has broken to plunder; by these means they are enabled to prevail against better troops than themselves.

"The Maráthá peasantry have some pride in the triumphs of their nation, and some ambition to partake in its military exploits; but, although circumstances might turn them into soldiers or robbers, at present their habits are decidedly peaceful. They are sober, frugal, industrious, mild and inoffensive to everybody, and among themselves neither dishonest nor insincere. The faults of their Government have, however, created the corresponding vices in them; its oppression and extortion have taught them dissimulation, mendacity, and fraud; and the insecurity of property has rendered them so careless of the future, as to lavish on a marriage or other ceremony the savings of years of parsimony. The first class of these vices, though prevalent throughout the whole, in their dealings with Government, is more conspicuous among the Patels, and others who are most brought into contact with their rulers; and the effects of the second are felt in the debts and embarrassments in which the whole of the agricultural population is plunged."

Under the British Government the character of the Maráthá people has greatly improved. They are now generally peaceful, contented, and industrious. They feel that they have perfect security for their lives and property, and that every encouragement is afforded them in their lawful pursuits. Though not equal in farming enterprise to the cultivators of Gujarát, they are fast gaining upon them. Multitudes of them, who a few years ago were wholly at the mercy of the money-lender, have a capital of their own sufficient for the demands of the season. The Sirdárs among them generally live on their own estates, which were continued to them, under the wise counsel of Mr. Elphinstone, notwithstanding their participation, or rather that of their fathers, in the hostile movements made by the Péshwah against the British Government. It is to be regretted that among the Maráthás, properly so called, education has as yet made comparatively little progress.

The principal personage represented in our Photograph is Fattih Singh Bhonslé, the brother of the Rájá of Akalkot, a large Jagírdár under the late Sátárá State. He is a young man of considerable activity, and was encouraged to stay in Bombay during the stirring time of the Great Mutiny. The other two persons represented in the picture are his Maráthá attendants.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

№ 9.

MARATHÁS OF THE DAKHAN?

MARÁTHÍ WOMEN OF BOMBAY.

(No. 10.)

THE Maráthás of Bombay are either natives of the island, or settlers or visitors from the Dakhan or Konkan. The women of the island and of the Konkan are certainly the most comely of the tribe, and confine themselves more to domestic work and its concomitants than their sisters from above the Ghâts, who generally act as outdoor labourers. To the group represented in our Photograph we would direct attention as pleasing specimens of the more domestic class. It will be seen from it that while the Maráthás do not belong to the A'ryan race, they are certainly cognate with it, as are the great majority of the agricultural caste in India. The costume of the Maráthí women is on the whole graceful, and suits their natural appearance. Such rotundities are not to be found among them as are seen among their ghí-loving sisters from Gujarát. They have no reason to be ashamed of their countenances, and they go about unveiled, and often with their heads uncovered by their *sádis*. They use a moderate quantity of ornaments, when able to provide them; but they generally keep their feet clear from the cumbersome anklets of which the women of many other provinces seem to be particularly fond. They are excellent housewives, and keep their residences, however humble they may be, comparatively clean. They are less influenced by the rage for pilgrimages to the shrines of the Dakhan than their connexions in the more eastern districts.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

Nº 10.

MARATHI WOMEN OF BOMBAY.

KAMÁTHÍS.

(No. 11 and 12.)

THE *Kamáthís* are the agricultural Shúdras of the Tailanga country, the language of which, commonly called the Telugu, is their vernacular. Several thousands of them are settled in Bombay. They are (both men and women) a most active and industrious class of people in household, outdoor, factory, and building work. They are generally clean in their persons, and decently, though not luxuriantly, clothed. Their women are almost the only class of Hindu females who may be seen in Bombay with shoes and umbrellas. They often sing their provincial songs, in which their language is rich, when engaged in hard labour. When, about forty years ago, they were employed in the repairs of Government House, Parell, Sir John Malcolm, who was a good vernacularist, would occasionally join them in their choruses, to their great delight. They are remarkable for their frugality, which they cultivate without meanness; and many of them accumulate considerable property, with which they often retire in the eve of life to their own country, to be succeeded in Bombay by their younger relatives. Speaking of the Kamáthís of Puná, Mr. Arthur Steele says: "They are rice-cleaners, and grinders of corn, and cutters of sticks; they also sell snuff, and some serve as tent and gun-lascars." But few of them are known to enter the Army. The parties represented in our Photographs are fair specimens of their class. The circular turbans and earrings of the men will be noticed. They have a Dravidian aspect. Though the Maráthás generally recognize them as of their own race, they form a caste quite distinct from them, and neither eat nor intermarry with them.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

Nº 11.

KÁMÁTHIS.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

Nº 12.

KÁMATHI WOMEN.

THE KULÍS OF THE WEST OF INDIA.

(No. 13.)

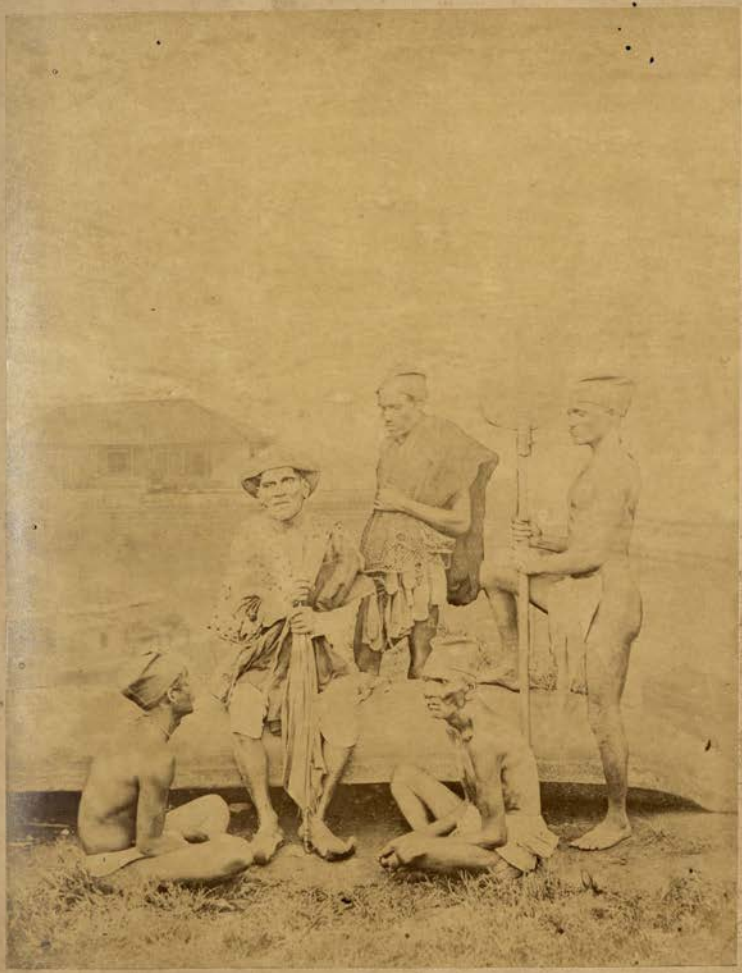
THE following notice of some of the Kulís in the west of India is extracted from a Lecture delivered before the Mechanics' Institution, in the Town Hall of Bombay, by Dr. Wilson :—

"Next to the *Bhills*, the *Kulís* or *Kolis* are worthy of notice as an ancient Indian people. Their name is not a patronymic; for it is derived from *kul*, a clan, and simply means clansman. They do not, I am persuaded, differ from the Bhills in race. They are the aborigines of the plains and comparatively open country, while the Bhills are the aborigines of the mountains and forests. Neither do they differ in race from the *Kulambís* or *Kunbís*, the regular cultivators of the west of India. Their difference from the Kulambís is to be found in their religion. The Kulambís are now wholly submissive to Bráhmanical institutes; and are ranked as the fourth estate of the Indian community. The Kulís, at the most, are only partially submissive to Bráhmanism, and in many instances they have no connexion at all with Bráhmanism. Their contact with the Kulambís does not lead to ceremonial defilement. The Kulambís in Gujarát sometimes take their wives from them, with a greater or less degree of concealment of the fact. In physical appearance, in many districts, they so much resemble the Kulambís that it is impossible to distinguish them. The allegation sometimes made, that they are altogether a coarser people, has no support from fact. The reverse of this has sometimes been noticed by minute observers. Colonel Mackintosh, speaking of a division of them, says: 'The Kolí females are generally slender and well-formed, with features of a pleasing expression. Some are very pretty. When compared with the stout, robust, and often coarse, Kunbí women, a very considerable difference is perceptible.' Some of the Kulí chiefs, of pure blood, I have sometimes scarcely been able to distinguish from Rájputs, who are not all of the A´ryan blood,—genuine descendants of the ancient Kshatriyas of India. I have met a 'Rájput chief,' who readily admitted that he was of Kulí descent. The greatest difference in the physical appearance of the Kulís, as in other tribes, arises from their *habitat* and occupations. Those of them who are fishermen, or who do business on the Indian rivers, or on the shores of the Indian Ocean, and who stand more aloof from the Indian community than others, on account of their connexion with the destruction of animal life, are pretty distinctive in their bodily appearance. They are particularly strong in the upper part of the body, the muscles of which, being called into exercise in the rowing and management of their boats and nets, are specially well developed.

"I have no doubt, as I have stated through the press, that the original inhabitants of Bombay, as of the adjoining islands, were Kulís. Considerable numbers of them still reside in the native town of Bombay and in the Mahim districts. Kulába receives its name from them, meaning 'the abode of Kulís.' Most of the Kulís in our neighbourhood, I need not tell you, are employed as fishermen, boatmen, and fish-vendors. Formerly they must have acted, to a good extent, as street-porters, for their designation is now given to persons of this occupation, though they belong principally to the class of cultivators. A few of the Kulís are carpenters, drivers of bullock-carts, and bricklayers. Some years ago, I got one or two of their youth, educated in the Missions in Bombay, introduced into our public offices as writers; but they showed no great satisfaction with the work of quill-driving. The male Kulís of Bombay were, up to a late period, obliged to pay a poll-tax to Government, named *áng-dêné*, after their arrival at the age of thirteen years. The number in the town thus taxed in 1842 was 922, who belonged to no fewer than eighteen Kuls. In the Mahim districts, 1,415 belonging to ten Kuls were taxed at the same date, the total Kulí population on the island being then estimated at 10,000 souls. The Kulís in the midst of us have merely local designations, as *Mumbaikar, Thánkar, Thalkar*, from the towns of Mumbái (Bombay), Thána, Thal, &c., to which their ancestors may have belonged. The predominating class of Kulís from Bombay to Surat is denominated the *Son* Kulí, or golden Kulí. Large numbers of Kulís congregate on the creeks near the sea in the fair season, for the purpose of catching and salting bumelows. Considerable numbers of them in the islands of Bombay, Salsette, and

Bassein, entered the Roman Catholic Church, when these islands were under the Portuguese. Large numbers of them, on an out break of the cholera about forty years ago, returned to heathenism, which they are now again disposed to abandon. The desideratum with them is instruction."

The chief of the Sona Kúlís resides at Alibágh, his progenitors, doubtless, having been distinguished aids to the pirate Angria, in the immediate neighbourhood of whose fortified islet of Kulába, that thriving town is situated. He is the person who wears a shawl in our Photograph. He is attended by a few of his boatmen. The spade form of the oar of one of them will be noticed. It is a specimen of the instrument of boat propulsion as used on the whole of the western shores of India.



Oriental Races and Tribes.

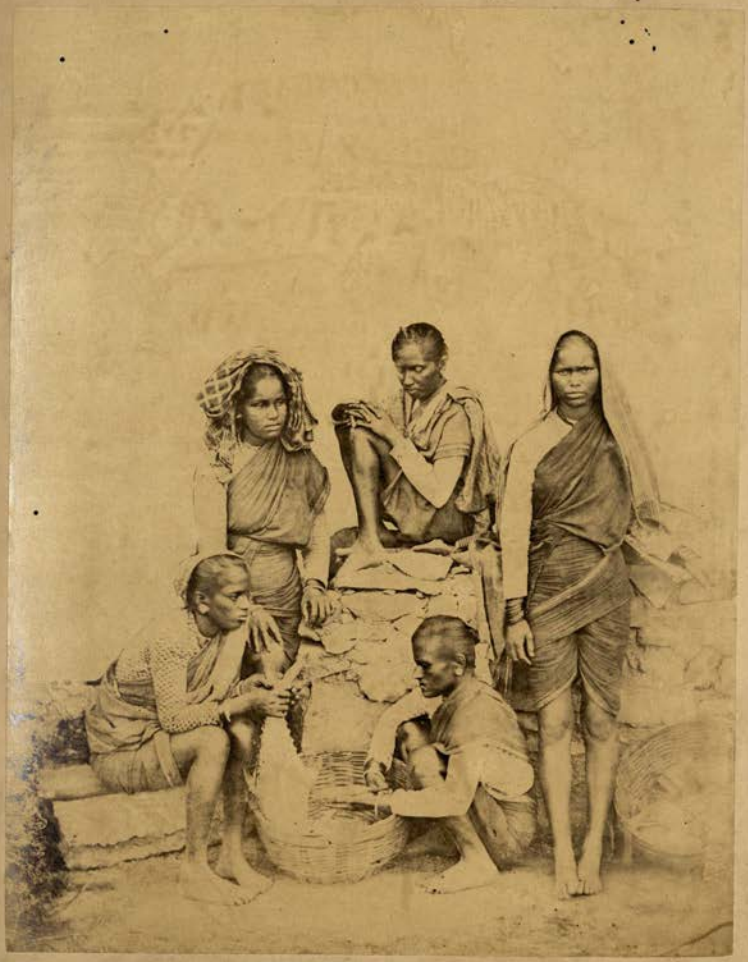
N° 13.

THE KULIS OF THE WEST OF INDIA.

FISHWOMEN OF BOMBAY.

(No. 14.)

THE Kulí fishermen of Bombay do not retail the products of their nets, but employ the female members of their families, especially the older ones, to dispose of them at the shores or at the fish markets established in different parts of the city. These women appear poor and insignificant when compared with the sturdy, picturesque, laborious, and provident dames of Newhaven and Fisherrow, seen on the streets of Edinburgh. Yet, someway or other, they do the needful for themselves, their families, and the ichthyophagic public, which, owing to caste prejudices, is more limited in an Indian than a European community. They are said to be occasionally eloquent in their bargain-making (which is not executed with much despatch), and to be not very complimentary to their customers. In our Photograph they are represented in their usual working apparel. Their better array, both in clothing and ornaments, they reserve for their holidays. They maintain more influence, perhaps, over their husbands than many of their sisters of the same rank of life in India, as they have to stand forth as their representatives in public. Few, or rather none, of them have received any education, however humble. Neither they nor their mates care for the principal gods of the Hindu pantheon; but they are far from being free from the power of superstition and the dread of demons. Requisitions are made upon them for labour from their earliest days. The huts in which they reside are generally of a mean character.



Oriental Races and Tribes.

No 14.

FISHWOMEN OF BOMBAY.

THE ÁGARÍ KULÍS OF THE KONKAN.

(No. 15.)

AFTER the notice taken of the Kulís in general, little need be said of the *Á'garis* in particular. They get their name from the word *Á'gar*, derived from the Sanskrit *ákara* (a mine), which in Maráthí, however, has much the signification of the Latin word *ager*. According to Molesworth, it means a plantation, a tract on the sea-shore where salterns are established, an enclosure round a house sown or planted, a place or spot of abundance or particular prevalence. It is applied to a class of Kulís, from their occupation in the production of salt, as well as in the management of boats and other native vessels. A good many of them, as remarked by Major Macintosh, are settled at Bombay, Bassein, Thána, and Panvel, and along the coast from Bombay to Surat. Some of them act as cultivators and labourers, and some of them, occasionally, as pálkhí-bearers. Like most of the Kulís, they are under the authority of their own caste-patils. Their favourite god is Khandobá, a deified King of Devagiri, Hodie Daulatábád, whose principal shrine is at Jejuri, about twenty-four miles south of Puná. They are generally better clothed than the common fishermen Kulís, but their style of dress is much the same as that of their compeers.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

N° 15.

THE AGARI KULIS OF THE KONKAN.

CHÁMBHÁRS.

(No. 16.)

THE *Chámbhárs* (Sanskrit, *Charmakára* in the singular) are workers and dealers in skins and leather. Another name by which they are popularly known is that of *Mochis*, or makers of shoes, sandals, and slippers. They rank low in the Hindu community, both on account of their race (which seems that of the degraded Máhars, Mángs, &c.) and their occupation with articles which, according to the caste system, are ceremoniously impure. Owing to their habit of working under cover, in verandahs and sheds, they are *not* so dark in colour as many of their compeers, being somewhat of a copper hue. There are provincial distinctions among them, which have led to the formation of different castes. The menders of old shoes are much looked down among them by the makers of new shoes; and, consequently, their families in many places do not intermarry. The *Dábalí*, one of their subdivisions in the Konkan, are stigmatized by their brethren of the Dakhan, both because, like the *Chakilliyan* of the Madras Presidency, they act the cobbler and eat cow's flesh. The *Chévalé* are said to devour the carcases of animals of the bovine race which die a natural death; and the same charge is brought against the *Sultánkars* (now become Muhammadans) and the *Haralibhaktas*, who dye skins red, and convert them into shoes. Many of the Chámbhárs engage in tent-making. In the Rajputáná States and North-west Provinces some of them act as cultivators. By the Maráthá shoemakers, those from these provinces are called *Paradosha Pardeshí Chámbhárs*.

No. 16.

CHAMBHARS.

MAHÁRS.

(No. 17.)

THE *Mahárs*, or *Parvárís*, as they are often called, are the exact counterpart of the Dheds in Gujarát, mentioned in our First Volume. It is, perhaps, from them that the Maráthá country, the native name of which is *Mahárâshtra*, derives its designation. The Bráhmans render this name the "great country," though they can adduce no satisfactory historical reason for their so doing. In the same way as *Gujarâshtra* means the country of the Gurjaras, so, it may be thought, *Mahárâshtra* means the country of the Mahárs. The Mahárs always represent themselves as the remains of a people, the original owners of the soil on which they dwell. They are to this day the oracles of the villages in all boundary disputes; and are called *pándharícha dolá*, the eye of the respectables ("the whites") of the village community. From them are chosen the lowest officers of the Balotadár associations, or burgh corporations, so general in the west of India. They watch the village, attend its Patel (head man) and Kulkarni (clerk), carry messages, attend and assist travellers, clean the Assembly Hall, and perform a great many other menial offices, for all which services they have allotments of land and various perquisites in goods and money, including the carcases of dead animals, which they readily eat. Many of them have entered the British Army, in which they make good soldiers, being often stronger and taller than men of the cultivator class. They make excellent hamáls, or palanquin-bearers. A considerable number of them are in the service of Europeans. Strictly speaking, they are not within the pale of Hinduism, for though they worship some of its gods in their lowest forms, they are not allowed to pass the threshold of the temples, and, generally speaking, except at marriages, they employ Bairágís or Gosávís, and other devotees, as their priests, instead of the Bráhmans. As can easily be conceived, they are warm friends of the British Government. They are not to be pitted by us against the other classes of society, but to be upheld in all their just rights and privileges. Considerable numbers of them have embraced Christianity in connexion with the different Missions in the west of India. The great majority of the converts of the American Mission at Ahmadnagar is composed of people of their tribe. The conversion of the Mahárs, as of other classes of the Indian population, is attended by their social elevation.

Nº 17.

MAHÁRS.

MÁNGS.

(No. 18.)

IN point of position the *Mángs* seem to be intermediate between the *Mahárs* (or *Parvárís*) of the Maráthá country and the *Párials* of the Madras Presidency. Even in the Maráthá country, their language has a considerable number of Dravidian or Southern words, as shown in the Statistical Report of the Principality of Koláp̃ur, published by the late Major Douglas Graham. Strong antipathies exist between them and the Mahárs,—they affecting to despise the Mahárs because they eat the flesh of the cow, and the Mahárs despising them because they eat the flesh of the sow. There are several varieties of them, such as the *Bundé, Nad Sandé, Ali Madgar, Gáruda, Burud, Uchali, Gáum, Dalálwár, Kokalwár*, and *Nicha Mángs*. They make ropes of twine and of the thongs of leather; and, when settled in the outskirts of villages, they act as village servants (watchmen, guides, holders and cleaners of horses, &c.), on which account they receive established dues and perquisites. Their *sparsha*, or touch, requires, according to the caste-system, ablution both of the body and clothes of the defiled.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

Nº 18.

MANGS.

MUHAMMADANS OF THE DAKHAN AND KONKAN.

(Nos. 19, 20, and 21.)

THE introduction of Muhammadanism into the Dakhan and Konkan, on any considerable scale, first took place when the armies of Allá ud-Dín Khilzáí invaded Gujarát, Málwá, and the Dakhan, about the year A.D. 1311—12; and it was afterwards nourished and extended by the Muhammadan dynasties which, in later times, were established at Ahmadábád, Ahmadnagar, Bijápur, and Haidarábád. Under all these dynasties a system of proselytism, in the usual Muhammadan form, was extensively conducted. In the Konkan it was favoured by the commerce there conducted. The consequence was, that very considerable numbers of Hindus, of various castes, abandoned their polytheism and pantheism for the religion of the Koran. There can be but little doubt that they soon drank deep into the spirit of their new faith, in its *Sunní*, or orthodox form, to which, to the present day, their descendants have continued attached, though the foreign Muhammadans connected with the armies of different invaders and visitors have not altogether fraternized with them.* In the social scale, they have a certain degree of visible respectability. We do not find among them the abject poverty and meanness of the lower castes of the Hindus. Nor, except in connexion with the mixed races in the Nizam's country, do we find among them any parties corresponding with the Indian nobles, or higher classes of Indian merchants. Those of them who are engaged in commerce conduct it on but a limited scale. Many of them are general shopkeepers, artizans, dyers, grain-dealers, wood-dealers, agriculturists, and (in the Konkan) boatmen, and seamen. They have generally rather stood aloof from the education offered them by Government and the Missionary bodies, though they are now, in some degree, beginning to be sensible of their interests in this important matter. Educated individuals are not wanting among them, embracing some not altogether indisposed to inquire into the claims of Christianity. Only a very few of them know anything of the distinctions existing among Muhammadans themselves, except perhaps in the matter of their difference with the *Shias*. Of the four orthodox sects the following meagre account was lately given by one of their number, of considerable intelligence: "The *Sháfi* pray with their hands, in the first instance, joined over their breasts; and then ask *dawa* by holding them united, as if to receive a blessing when thrown into them. The *Hanafi* do not ask *dawa* at all. The *Málaki* pray with their hands at their sides. The *Hambali* do as the Shafi." Of the metaphysical and higher distinctions of these sects he knew nothing. The parties represented in our Photographs belong to the more respectable classes of the Muhammadan community. Their Indian origin is marked in their countenances; and it is further proved by the Maráthí surnames which some of them retain. Caste customs have generally disappeared among the Indian Muhammadans, but the spirit of caste is not altogether extinct among them. When, however, the lower orders of the Hindus join them, they happily do not allow them to remain under their original social degradation. No complaints about the defilement which the Hindus allege they contract from them are for a moment listened to by the Muhammadan community, of which its Hindu neighbours stand greatly in awe. It is somewhat curious that the Dakhaní and Konkaní Muhammadans, though they mourn over the death of Hasan and Husein, the sons of 'Alí, have converted the anniversary of their death into a regular carnival, though they associate it with the sacred month, the Muharram, the season of fasting.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

No 10.

MUHAMMADANS OF THE KONKAN.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

№ 20.

MUHAMMADAN WOMEN OF THE KONKAN.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

№ 21.

MUHAMMADAN WOMEN OF THE DAKHAN?

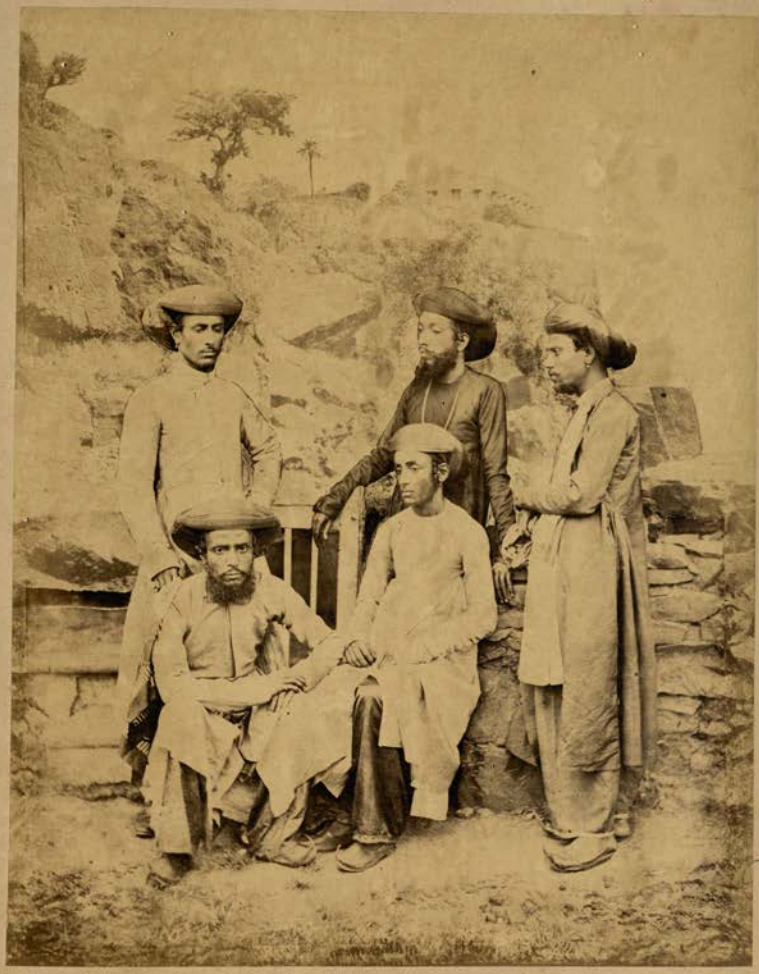
BENE-ISRAEL OF BOMBAY.

(No. 22.)

IN the island of Bombay and on the adjoining coast on the continent, from the Puná road to the Bankot river, there is a population of "Bene-Israel" amounting to about 8,000 or 10,000 souls. In Bombay, with the exception of a few shopkeepers and writers, they are principally artizans, particularly masons and carpenters. On the continent they are generally engaged in agriculture, or in the manufacture and sale of oil. Some of them, often bearing an excellent character as soldiers are to be found in most of the regiments of native infantry in this Presidency. They can easily be recognized. They are a little fairer than the other natives of India of the same rank of life with themselves; and their physiognomy seems to indicate a union in their case of both the Abrahamic and Joktanic blood. Their dress is a modification of that of the Hindus and Musalmans among whom they dwell. They have generally two names, one of which is derived from the more ancient Israelitish personages mentioned in the Bible, and the other from Hindu usage. Their social and religious discipline is administered by their elders, the chief of whom, in the principal villages in which they reside, are denominated Kádhis, or judges. They are all circumcised according to the law of Moses; and, though till lately they had no manuscript copy of the Pentateuch, or other books of the Bible, they receive the whole of the Old Testament as of Divine authority. They denominate themselves BENE-ISRAEL, or Sons of Israel; and till lately they viewed the designation of Jehudí, or Jew, as one of reproach. They have been settled in India for many centuries. They say that their forefathers came to this country from the west or north by sea—that is, either from Arabia or the Persian Gulf. For long, many were accustomed to consider them the descendants of a portion of the Israelites who were removed from their homes and carried captive to Halah, and Habor, and Hara, and Nahar-Gozan, and other places in the neighbourhood of Mesopotamia, by the Assyrian kings. But Dr. Wilson—from whose paper, in the *Oriental Christian Spectator* for 1854, we collect these notices of them—has shown good ground for believing that they came from Yemen, or Arabia Felix, to Rájápurí in the Konkan, about the sixth century of the Christian era. Writing of them, he says: "We are disposed to believe that they came to India from Yemen,* or Arabia Felix, with the Jews or Israelites of which province—for they have both designations—they have from time immemorial had much intercourse, and whom they much resemble in their bodily structure and appearance. These Israelites of Arabia have a very remarkable history. The remnant of Judah, after the captivity effected by Nebuchadnezzar, was placed under the care of Gedaliah, the son of Ahikam, who was murdered by Ishmael, the son of Nethaniah. It afterwards adhered to Johanan, the son of Koreah, and Jezaniah, the son of Hoshaiah, who, with the other Captains, were besought by the Prophet Jeremiah to remain in the land, and by no means to flee into Egypt, where it should be pursued by the King of Babylon, and afterwards by Darius Hystaspes, acting in his place, who should smite the land of Egypt, and deliver such as were to death to death, and such as were for captivity to captivity. (See Jer. xlii., xliii.) They nevertheless went into Egypt; for 'they obeyed not the voice of the Lord.' They were there overtaken by the judgments threatened Many of the captives were sent to the Hejáz, in Arabia, where they founded several towns near Yathreb, afterwards called Medinah, and in which they maintained and extended their religion. These towns were visited by Tobba, a king of the Hemyarites, from Yemen, in the south of Arabia, when he was advancing northwards on a military expedition; and he was influenced by the Jewish teachers K'aab and As'ad to embrace their faith, which, with the aid of these teachers and other Israelitish colonists, he afterwards propagated in his native land. To this country, too, many of the Jews betook themselves after their dispersion by Titus and Hadrian, and the defeat of Zenobia by Aurelian. Judaism was violently upheld and propagated by the kings of Yemen. Dhu Nawás, one of their number, proved such an eager opponent of Christianity, when it began to be propagated in that country, that he provoked an invasion of his territories by the Ethiopian sovereigns whose country had been converted to Christianity in the

* Yemen, literally, the right hand (the spectator looking to the rising sun), as opposed to Shám, the left, is applied to the country south of the Hejáz; Shám, in the same relation, referring to that lying to the north, of which Damascus is considered the capital. The "South-Country" seems to have been an ancient name of Arabia Felix, for, in the Gospels, the Queen of Sheba, in this district, is called the "Queen of the South."

fourth century, who maintained their ground in it for four generations, till, by the help of the Persian Khosru Anushirwan (Chosroes), they were finally expelled, not many years before the rise of Muhammadism. The Israelites of Yemen, descendants of the original stock of Abraham and the Arabian proselytes, are still estimated at 200,000 or 300,000 souls. From this body of Israelites, the most contiguous to India, as we have already hinted, and maintaining intercourse with India to the present day, our Bene-Israel, who so much resemble them, have most likely been derived. It is not improbable that, with some of their women, their forefathers left Yemen during its occupation and subjection, and the retaliation against it, by the Ethiopian kings, in the sixth century of the Christian era; about which time, also, we are now inclined to think, the Cochin Jews came to India, for their first copperplate charter, which has not the early date commonly assigned to it, seems to belong to this period, and was witnessed by *Markan* Chattan, evidently a Christian, probably one of the early converts of the Syrian Missionaries to Malabar. The Bene-Israel themselves say that they have been in India about fifteen or sixteen centuries; but they have not a single document confirmatory of this tradition. We have given a full account of their manners and customs in the Second Volume of the Lands of the Bible, which also contains historical notices of the Arabian Israelites, from whom, we think, they are sprung."



Oriental Races and Tribes.

Nº 22.

BENE-ISRAEL OF BOMBAY.

GOANESE CHRISTIANS.

(No. 23.)

THE Portuguese in India early showed great zeal in the propagation of Roman Catholicism, particularly after the arrival at Goa of the celebrated Jesuit Missionary, Francis Xavier, about the middle of the sixteenth century. Though the means which they used for this purpose were not always of an approvable character, being both compulsory and corruptive, as is evident from the instructions contained in the letter addressed to the Governor-General of All the Indies by John III. of Portugal, when he requested him to favour the operations of Xavier, yet they were ultimately crowned with great success. The consequence is to this day, that while the whole population of the Portuguese territories in India, according to the last Census, amounts to 307,884 souls, more than two-thirds of this number, or 232,495, are Christians after the Romish form. Of these, only 1,048 are entered as "descendants of Europeans;" leaving 231,347 to be considered of Indian origin. These native Christians are an exceedingly quiet and peaceable set of people. They furnish many of the butlers and cooks of Europeans in Bombay, and are commonly very satisfactory as servants. At Goa, many of them are engaged in farming, and in the practice of various handicrafts. In Bombay, a considerable number of them are employed in general business, or as writers. They always consider the Goa territories as their home, however seldom they may be able to visit them. The dress of their females resembles that of the natives, as may be seen from our Photograph; while that of the men is of the European fashion. They are fond of early marriages, which they celebrate with considerable ceremoniousness—of course, making a display of their best apparel on these occasions. Since the quarrel of the Portuguese Government with the Pope, about the patronage of the churches in India, they have not been his obedient subjects, and have, consequently, been pronounced "schismatics" by the Missionaries now favoured by his Holiness and the Propaganda. In this whole matter they have shown considerable independence of spirit.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

Nº 23.

GOANESE CHRISTIANS.

ROMAN CATHOLICS OF SALSETTE.

(Nos. 24 and 25.)

THE native name of Salsette is Sáshtí, so named, probably, from the olden enumeration of its townships. The situation of the island to the north of Bombay—to which it was first joined by a raised road, constructed during the administration of Jonathan Duncan, afterwards by the Jejeebhoy Causeway, and lately by the lines of the two railways leading from Bombay—is well known. It is about nineteen miles in length, and the average of its breadth, which is unequal, is about eleven. It is a good deal broken into on the west by the sea; and on the east, particularly to the north, are found its highest hills, which are of basalt and basaltic tufa. A great portion of it is very beautiful and picturesque; and it is further interesting from the groups of ancient religious excavations which it contains. Of these groups, those of Kánhérí and Kondatí are Buddhist; and those of Jogeshvarí, Mont Pesir, and Mágáthánú Bráhmanical. A good part of it lying to its east is overrun with jungle of a varied character. It is in this direction, however, and on a creek running from Bombay, that Thánú, its capital, is found. This town contains a population of about 6,000. Most of the other towns and villages lie on its western side. The total enumeration of its people, old and young, amounts to about 60,000. It came into the possession of the Portuguese much about the time that the island of Bombay did. It was understood to have been ceded to the English by the Portuguese, along with the island of Bombay, in 1662, of which it was considered by many to be an appendage; but it was not delivered to the English in 1664, when the deed for the transfer of Bombay was practically executed. In 1739 it was taken from the Portuguese by the Maráthás. In 1774, it was conquered by the British, who retained it, according to a supplementary clause of the treaty of Purandar, till 1782, when it was finally ceded to them by the Treaty of Sálpá. When under the Portuguese, it early became a field of labour both to Jesuit and Franciscan Missionaries, who, aided as they were by the Portuguese authorities, experienced so much success that about the half of the population entered the Romish Church. The converts were, to a certain extent, from all classes of the native community, but particularly from the Kulí fishermen, the Parvárís, or Mahárs, and the agriculturists. The first-mentioned of these proselytes have not been very steady adherents to Roman Catholicism. Speaking of them, Colonel A. Mackintosh thus writes (in a paper presented to the Bombay Geographical Society): "It is said that their ancestors were of the tribe of Son Kolis, and that they were forcibly converted to Christianity, some ages ago, by the Portuguese. These people are cultivators, extractors of toddy from the palm trees, and others sellers of fish. They follow the precepts of the Roman Catholic faith; but it seems an extraordinary schism has sprung up among them, or it ought rather to be said that some of them have forsaken the true faith and reverted to Paganism. This retrogression took place about the years 1820 and 1821, when that terrible scourge, the cholera morbus, was raging so furiously in the Konkan, and along the coast. Many of these poor ignorant creatures, seeing desolation spread in their families by this heavy visitation, thought they would be much more fortunate and happy were they to pay their adorations to Devi Khandobá and Vithobá, than by continuing to do so to the Almighty. A portion of them having accordingly come to this resolution, they at once abandoned the true God, and supplicated these false idols to be merciful and kind to them, and to relieve them from the distress by which they were surrounded. They have discontinued all intercourse with their Christian brethren, and resumed the custom of wearing the Shendí, or tuft of hair, on the crown of the head." The Mahárs have scarcely found their due place among the converts, owing to unsubdued caste prejudices. The cultivators from the Shúdra caste are the most respectable of the converts. It is of them, male and female, that the two following Photographs are illustrative. The men, it will be observed, have a modified European costume, of a rather sparse character. The dress of the females is not much removed from that of the native women. The men are best known in Bombay as the drivers of the carts of grass which every morning are brought for sale into the island.

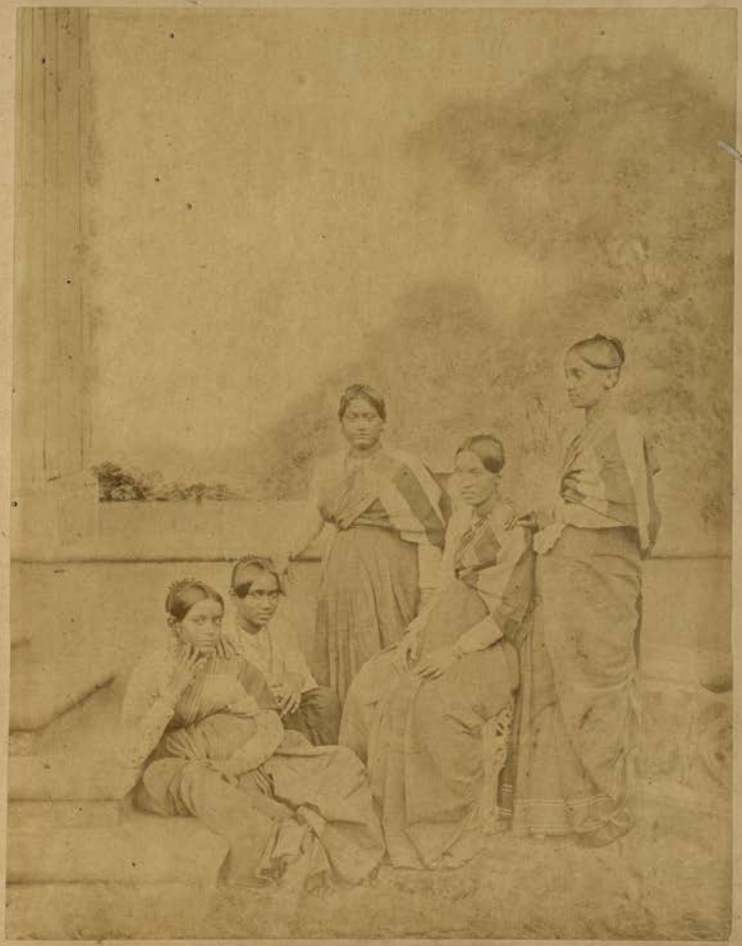
In the towns of Bandora and Thánú, and perhaps in one or two villages, there are a few Roman Catholic families of mixed

blood. There are fourteen parishes in the island, the largest church of which is that of St. Andrew, at Bandora. The Jesuits have here recommenced operations, principally with a view to gain over the adherents of the Archbishop of Goa to loyalty to the Pope, and have a separate establishment of their ówn. The other churches are at Tháná (the seat of the rector), Amboli, Pai, Poinser, Bainder, Dongarí, Utan, Gorái, Manorí, Versáo, Kálmá, Karlá, and Mán. A population of about 15,000, including children, is connected with them. Hindus, Muhammadans, and Pársís have of late years settled in Salsette in considerable numbers.

Oriental Races and Tribes.

Nº 24.

COONBIES (ROMAN CATHOLICS OF SALSETTE).



Oriental Races and Tribes. Nº 25.

ROMAN CATHOLIC WOMEN OF SALSETTE.

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